§ 1395b–10. Addressing health care disparities

(a) Evaluating data collection approaches

The Secretary shall evaluate approaches for the collection of data under this subchapter, to be performed in conjunction with existing quality reporting requirements and programs under this subchapter, that allow for the ongoing, accurate, and timely collection and evaluation of data on disparities in health care services and performance on the basis of race, ethnicity, and gender. In conducting such evaluation, the Secretary shall consider the following objectives:

(1) Protecting patient privacy.

(2) Minimizing the administrative burdens of data collection and reporting on providers and health plans participating under this subchapter.

(3) Improving Medicare program data on race, ethnicity, and gender.

(b) Reports to Congress

(1) Report on evaluation

Not later than 18 months after July 15, 2008, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the evaluation conducted under subsection (a). Such report shall, taking into consideration the results of such evaluation—

(A) identify approaches (including defining methodologies) for identifying and collecting and evaluating data on health care disparities on the basis of race, ethnicity, and gender for the original Medicare fee-for-service program under parts A and B, the Medicare Advantage program under part C, and the Medicare prescription drug program under part D; and

(B) include recommendations on the most effective strategies and approaches to reporting HEDIS quality measures as required under section 1395w–22 (e)(3) of this title and other nationally recognized quality performance measures, as appropriate, on the basis of race, ethnicity, and gender.

(2) Reports on data analyses

Not later than 4 years after July 15, 2008, and 4 years thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that includes recommendations for improving the identification of health care disparities for Medicare beneficiaries based on analyses of the data collected under subsection (c).

(c) Implementing effective approaches

Not later than 24 months after July 15, 2008, the Secretary shall implement the approaches identified in the report submitted under subsection (b)(1) for the ongoing, accurate, and timely collection and evaluation of data on health care disparities on the basis of race, ethnicity, and gender.